

P. T. Ameen  
Assistant Vice President  
Technical Services

B. J. Pague  
Secretary



**ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN  
RAILROADS**

**October 13, 2004**

**CIRCULAR LETTER  
(c-9928)**

**Subject: Town Meeting: Advanced Technology Safety Initiative (ATSI)  
November 16, 2004  
TO MEMBERS AND PRIVATE CAR OWNERS**

**File Number: ATSI**

As many in the Mechanical discipline are aware, a Task Force and Core Working Committee have been working for the past two years on opportunities to make the overall freight interchange system safer and more efficient by taking advantage of new technology that facilitates more sophisticated assessment of the condition of in-service equipment. If properly implemented, this approach can both enhance the performance of rail equipment and prolong the life of railroad infrastructure. The Task Force has explored ways to revamp the current system of car repairs to offer opportunities for proactive maintenance intervention by car owners rather than a primary reliance on the current manual inspection approach which focuses on identification of component failure or excessive wear conditions.

Under the contemplated approach, railroads and other car owners would be encouraged to more efficiently manage their freight car fleets by performing proactive predictive maintenance within a finite "Window of Opportunity" based upon sound scientific and engineering assessments. The desired outcome is enhanced performance and network safety with a net reduction in overall system costs.

A Town Meeting of all interested parties was held June 12, 2003 in Chicago to share the approach and solicit feedback (& support) from all interested stakeholders, particularly private car owners, before moving forward. Since the initial Town Hall meeting, a continuing series of public meetings have been held to keep all stakeholders, i.e., railroads, private car owners, leasing companies and contract repair companies in the information loop. The essence of this initiative is to employ a predictive and proactive maintenance system, using the best available technologies to detect and report poorly performing equipment and other nascent problems before they result in accidents or undue rail damage. Since the first meeting, the AAR has encouraged and received direct participation from all stakeholders in reviewing this new approach. The stakeholders have worked together on new concepts that evolved into proposed Interchange Rules as the process moved forward. Industry comments were solicited via circular letters on July 16, 2004 and August 17, 2004. Additional information on the ATSI is available on the AAR web-site: [aar.org](http://aar.org).

Additional Town Meetings were held February 3-4, 2004 and August 11, 2004 in Chicago.

Another Town Meeting has been scheduled for: **Tuesday November 16, 2004** in Chicago from **1:00 PM - 5:00 PM**.

The agenda will include:

- 1) An update of the Advanced Technology Safety Initiative implementation
- 2) Continued discussion of proposed Interchange Rules revisions

- 3) The WILD Calibration & Verification Standard (Field Manual Appendix F)
- 4) Review of the Equipment Health Management System data generated since the October 1, 2004 launch
- 5) Presentations from the Wheel Out-of-Round Root Cause Technical Advisory Group

*In addition, an **Equipment Performance Monitoring & Equipment Health Management Systems Users** session for all interested parties will be conducted by Railinc and TTCI from **10:00 AM - Noon** in advance of the main Town Meeting session.*

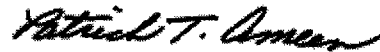
**Meeting Location/Hotel Details:**

The Palmer House Hilton                      Crystal Room  
17 East Monroe Street  
Chicago, Illinois, US, 60603  
(312) 726-7500

Room Blocks are under "Association of American Railroads" (\$189).

The sessions are open to all stakeholders of the AAR Car Repair Billing & Interchange system: railroads, private car owners, leasing companies, contract repair companies, and suppliers.

Sincerely,



Patrick T. Ameen